



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Legislative Affairs

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

June 3, 2004

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Conyers:

This is in response to your letter dated February 27, 2004, to Attorney General Ashcroft regarding an anti-war protest that occurred last November at Camp Dodge's Iowa National Guard Headquarters.

The Drake University Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild held a meeting on November 15, 2003, on University grounds for the purpose of organizing an anti-war demonstration. The demonstration occurred the following day at the Iowa National Guard's headquarters, which is located in the State Area Regional Command Armory in Des Moines, Iowa. During the demonstration, a group of protesters trespassed on the Armory grounds; as a result, several individuals were arrested. While being arrested, one demonstrator allegedly kicked and injured a deputy sheriff. State assault charges are pending against this individual. Another demonstrator pleaded guilty to a state trespass charge after attempting to enter the Armory grounds and approach the Commandant's quarters.

Each United States Attorney is responsible for enforcing in his or her district the Federal laws enacted by Congress. Because criminal activity was reported to have occurred at the Iowa National Guard Headquarters, the United States Attorney's Office (USAO) was asked to review the matter to determine if any of the alleged activity merited Federal prosecution. We can assure you that the USAO did not initiate an investigation in an attempt to silence the protesters, but rather to protect the safety of other citizens and our national security. At this time, the matter is not under investigation, nor is the USAO seeking records from Drake University.

cc: The Honorable F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.
Chairman